

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for handling network accounting information, comprising:
 - 2 (a) receiving records indicative of network events from an input source;
 - 3 (b) selecting action events based on the input source; and
 - 4 (c) executing the selected action events on the records.
- 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the action events include computer
2 code for executing a process using the records.
- 1 3. The method as recited in claim 2, and further comprising the step of
2 compiling the computer code prior to the execution thereof.
- 1 4. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising the step of storing
2 data associated with the records.
- 1 5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the data is stored in a table.
- 1 6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the table includes a plurality of
2 rows each containing a plurality of columns each including data of a different
3 type.
- 1 7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the data of each of the rows
2 expires after a predetermined time period.

- 1 8. The method as recited in claim 7, wherein an action event is executed to
2 determine whether the data of each of the rows is deleted upon expiring.
- 1 9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein multiple action events are
2 executed in parallel.
- 1 10. A computer program product for handling network accounting information,
2 comprising:
3 (a) computer code for receiving records indicative of network events from an
4 input source;
5 (b) computer code for selecting action events based on the input source; and
6 (c) computer code for executing the selected action events on the records.
- 1 11. The computer program product as recited in claim 10, wherein the action
2 events include computer code for executing a process using the records.
- 1 12. The computer program product as recited in claim 11, and further comprising
2 computer code for compiling the computer code prior to the execution
3 thereof.
- 1 13. The computer program product as recited in claim 10, and further comprising
2 computer code for storing data associated with the records.
- 1 14. The computer program product as recited in claim 13, wherein the data is
2 stored in a table.
- 1 15. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the table
2 includes a plurality of rows each containing a plurality of columns each
3 including data of a different type.

- 1 16. The computer program product as recited in claim 15, wherein the data of
2 each of the rows expires after a predetermined time period.
- 1 17. The computer program product as recited in claim 16, wherein an action
2 event is executed to determine whether the data of each of the rows is deleted
3 upon expiring.
- 1 18. The computer program product as recited in claim 10, wherein multiple
2 action events are executed in parallel.
- 1 19. A system for handling network accounting information, comprising:
2 (a) logic for receiving records indicative of network events from an input source;
3 (b) logic for selecting action events based on the input source; and
4 (c) logic for executing the selected action events on the records.
- 1 20. A method for handling network accounting information, comprising:
2 (a) receiving records indicative of network events from an input source;
3 (b) storing data associated with the records in a table, wherein the table includes
4 a plurality of rows each containing a plurality of columns each including data
5 of a different type, the data of each of the rows expiring after a predetermined
6 time period;
7 (c) selecting action events based on the input source; and
8 (d) executing the selected action events on the records;
9 (e) wherein at least one of the action events is executed to delete the data of each
10 of the rows upon expiring.
- 1 21. A method for handling network accounting information of any type,
2 comprising:
3 (a) reading configuration data which defines a table by specifying at least one
4 field identifier and a timeout type and period, the configuration data further
5 defining a plurality of input sources by specifying at least one parameter for

- 6 each input source, the configuration data further defining a plurality of action
7 events by specifying code capable of executing each action event;
8 (b) creating the table defined by the field identifier of the configuration data;
9 (c) initializing the input sources;
10 (d) loading event handlers with the code included with the configuration data;
11 (e) receiving records indicative of network events from the initialized input
12 sources;
13 (f) storing the records in the table;
14 (g) selecting action events based on the input source associated with the received
15 records;
16 (h) executing the selected action events on the records utilizing the event
17 handlers; and
18 (i) deleting the records upon expiring in accordance with the timeout type and
19 period of the configuration data;
20 (j) wherein at least one of the action events is executed to determine whether the
21 data of each of the rows is deleted upon expiring.

1 22. The method as recited in claim 21, wherein the execution of the selected
2 action events includes: discarding records stored during the execution of
3 previous action events, parsing the configuration data associated with the
4 selected action events, and utilizing the parsed configuration data to repeat
5 steps (b) through (d).

- 1 23. A data structure for handling network accounting information of any type,
2 comprising:
3 (a) a configuration data object which defines a table by specifying at least one
4 field identifier and a timeout type and period, the configuration data object
5 further defining a plurality of input sources by specifying at least one
6 parameter for each input source, the configuration data object further
7 defining a plurality of action events by specifying code capable of executing
8 each action event;

